

Dear Chairs and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee,

My name is Jennifer Barro. I am a volunteer with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, a retired physician and a resident of Greenwich, Connecticut. **I am writing in support of HB 6355: *An Act Concerning Risk Protection Orders or Warrants*.**

Connecticut was the first state to enact an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law in 1999. This law allows law enforcement to seek a court order to temporarily remove firearms from an individual who they believe is at imminent risk of harming themselves or others. ERPO type laws are now on the books in 19 states plus Washington, D.C.; in 12 of those states and D.C., family members may directly petition the court. Under our current Connecticut law, only law enforcement officials can petition the court and family members must approach the police to initiate the ERPO process. Unfortunately, some individuals may not feel comfortable approaching the police or may feel that suicidality is not a law enforcement issue. **Updating our ERPO law to allow family members and specified medical professionals to directly approach the courts will save precious time during a crisis, while still safeguarding due process.**

There is no evidence that family members abuse the ERPO process to harass or unnecessarily disarm gun owners in states where family is permitted to directly petition the court, and just like any other court process, anyone who lies under oath would be guilty of perjury. Additionally, courts in Connecticut, Indiana and Florida that have found that ERPO laws do not violate an individual's due process rights or the Second Amendment.¹

Two thirds of all gun deaths in our country are due to suicide and on average, someone dies from suicide every 3 days in our state. Improving the existing ERPO law would assist family members and medical professionals in temporarily removing guns from loved ones and patients who could be an imminent risk to themselves or others. Our current ERPO law is already making a difference: one study estimated that one life is saved, through suicide averted, for every 10-20 ERPOs issued.² But, the ERPO law can save even more lives, and the proposed changes in HB 6355 can help realize that potential.

I ask you to please support HB 6355. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jennifer Barro, MD
Greenwich, CT

¹ <https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/who-can-have-a-gun/extreme-risk-protection-orders>

² Jeffrey W. Swanson et al., Implementation and Effectiveness of Connecticut's Risk-Based Gun Removal Law: Does it Prevent Suicides?, 80 *Law and Contemporary Problems* 179-208 (2017)
Available at: <http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/lcp/vol80/iss2/8>